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32 Cars derailed on BNSF Railway east of Gallup

GALLUP-On Friday, Oct. 23, at approximately 7 a.m., BNSF Railway reported that 32 cars had derailed east of Gallup, N.M. at the Southfork Bridge that crosses north to Red Rock State Park.

State Road 118, also known as Old Route 66, was shut down between Mile Marker 26 and Mile Marker 32 while hazmat crews were on scene to asses a spill from one of the train cars. Hazmat determined the spill was liquid asphalt and was non-hazardous. BNSF Railway is responsible for clean-up of the spill.

According to Sergeant Chad Pierce, Public Information Officer with the New Mexico State Police, State Road 118 is open.

Residents and southbound commuters from Pinedale or Church Rock have also been advised to use Superman Canyon Road or Becenti Trail if necessary.

President Begaye recently met with Carl R. Ice, President and CEO of BNSF Railway based in Ft. Worth, TX, CEO Ice assured



It was reported that 32 cars had derailed along the BNSF Railway east of Gallup on the morning of Friday, Oct. 23. (Photo: Ernesto Salazar)

President Begaye that safety is BNSF's first priority. CEO Ice mentioned that a Navajo group of BNSF workers in Grants, N.M. had recently been recognized for their safety standards.

"This derailment is certainly un-

fortunate. However, we trust that the New Mexico Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be diligent in making sure that anything spilled is not hazardous to the environment or to people. EPA must be forthright in this situation as many of our Navajo people live along the railway," President Begaye said.

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